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ABSTRACT

Minnesota's Interagency Early Childhood Network, which includes representatives of early childhood, family, and health-related programs from four state agencies, developed this set of outcomes and indicators measuring the well-being of children and families. The outcomes and indicators are designed to be a source for community programs that focus on young children and their families. They can serve as benchmarks of progress to: (1) guide discussions with state and local policymakers, potential funders, and community members; (2) enhance existing programs and services by providing a focus for evaluating progress in meeting community priorities; and (3) promote healthy and child-focused communities. Seven outcomes (broad statements of intent) are listed, and several indicators (quantitative or qualitative measures of the extent to which the outcomes are being achieved) are given for each outcome. The outcomes are: (1) families and communities provide a safe and stable environment for their children; (2) families are supported by their communities; (3) families have adequate economic resources to appropriately provide their children; (4) children and families are healthy and well nourished; (5) parent and child relationships are positive and nurturing; (6) all children and their families have access to quality early childhood care and education; and (7) children reach their individual development potential. (EV)

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ALL OUR CHILDREN

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OUTCOMES INDICATORS

ED 402 138

FOR MINNESOTA'S YOUNG CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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ALL OUR CHILDREN

Heart:
We care about children and want the best for them.

All children can shine if they have a healthy, safe and nurturing environment.

Flower:
Growth will occur when communities work together and put children first.

Hand:
Helping hands, working together, pledging non-violent communities for children.

OUTCOMES INDICATORS

In Minnesota, public dollars are diminishing and we face extraordinary challenges in redesigning the services and supports provided by government. Now, more than ever, the needs of young children deserve thoughtful, deliberate attention by communities and policy makers to assure childrens' needs are a high priority when difficult choices are made.

The quality of services provided to children and families is a barometer of a community's health and well-being. Anyone who has either benefited from or provided support services to families knows this to be inherently true. But in today's times of limited funding, the communities and decision makers that authorize funding for these programs, are increasingly demanding us to "prove it."

As a result, the need to measure and demonstrate the success of these programs is vital. Measurements will provide a benchmark for success and allow the improved effectiveness of programs to be self-evident. Just as importantly, a system of uniform standards will help all partners in the process to be "on the same page."

This brochure describes a new approach to measuring the success of our efforts. We are confident that this set of outcomes and indicators will be a useful tool in strengthening the programs that support young children and their families.

HOW CAN THESE OUTCOMES & INDICATORS BE USED ?

These outcomes and indicators are designed to be a resource for community programs that focus on young children and their families. They can effectively serve as benchmarks of progress to:

- guide discussions with state and local policy makers, potential funders and community members;
- enhance existing programs and services by providing a focus for evaluating progress in meeting community priorities; and
- promote healthy and child focused communities;

These indicators are not all inclusive. Rather, they are intended to invite expansion and elaboration by community members and others as programs and services are planned for young children and families.

KEY CONCEPTS & DEFINITIONS

- **OUTCOMES**

Outcomes may be referred to as "goals" or "results."

Outcomes are broad statements of intent reflecting the desired bottom-line conditions of well-being for children, families and communities.

Outcomes are framed in language that has broad, common understanding.

- **INDICATORS**

Indicators also are called "benchmarks" or "performance measures."

Indicators are quantitative or qualitative measures of the extent to which goals/outcomes/results are being achieved. Several are typically needed to approximate whether the state, community or program is achieving its goals/outcomes/results and objectives.

INTERAGENCY EARLY CHILDHOOD NETWORK

The Interagency Early Childhood Network includes representatives of early childhood, family and health-related programs from four Minnesota state agencies. A priority of the Interagency Early Childhood Network in 1995-97 was the development of a common set of outcomes and indicators measuring the well being of children and families that transcends specific state agencies and programs.

This set of core outcomes and indicators was constructed through the use of a multi-attribute consensus building process facilitated by Pat Seppanen and Ron Erikson from the University of Minnesota. The end result reflects a shared vision and common ground for the work on behalf of young children and families in Minnesota.

Members of the Interagency Early Childhood Network involved in the initial development of these outcomes and indicators are listed on the next page.

MEMBERS OF THE INTERAGENCY EARLY CHILDHOOD NETWORK

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES & LEARNING

- BETTY COOKE
  Early Childhood Family Education, Way to Grow, Learning Readiness
- MICHAEL EASTMAN
  Early Childhood Special Education, Monitoring and Compliance
- LOIS ENGSTROM
  Early Childhood and Family Initiatives
- DEBBYKAY PETERSON
  Learning Readiness, Early Childhood Screening
- JAN RUBENSTEIN
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MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

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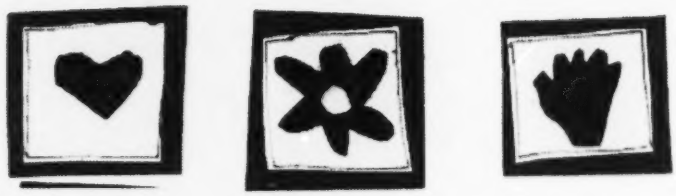
  Family and Children's Services - Child Care programs *
- LINDA FUHRMAN
  Children's Mental Health
- BARBARA O'SULLIVAN
  Child Development Block Grant *

* These programs are now located in the Minnesota Department of Children, Families & Learning



I. Outcome:
Families and communities provide a safe and stable environment for their children.

Indicators:

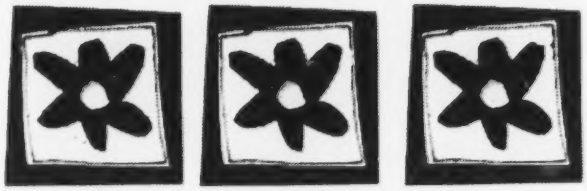
- Percent of children and adults who feel safe in their homes and communities.
- Percent of parents using quality child care arrangements.
- Percent of families using injury prevention measures.
- Percent of housing units that meet health, safety and other building codes.
- Percent of children and families needing homeless shelter who are served.
- Percent of children who have a significant ongoing positive relationship with more than one caring adult.
- Rate of teen-age pregnancy.
- Percent of children and adults who have been victims of crime.
- Number and rate of children who have experienced multiple placements prior to family reunification of permanent placement.
- Number and rate of substantiated child maltreatment.
- Percent of families who have access to resources in making child care decisions.

II. Outcome:

Families are supported by their communities.

Indicators:

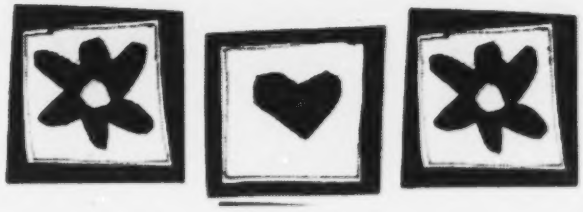
- Percent of expectant and new parents supported by their families and communities.
- Percent of families knowledgeable about community resources and programs needed by their child and family members.
- Percent of families using community resources and programs needed by their child and family members.
- Percent of communities with parent and family support, education and education services.
- Percent of families who advocate for themselves and others.
- Percent of families involved in community building activities for themselves and others.
- Percent of families whose transportation needs are met.
- Percent of workplaces with family-friendly policies.
- Percent of families who are satisfied with available community resources and programs.
- Percent of communities providing resources and support for families experiencing divorce.
- Percent of adolescent parents who are receiving comprehensive services.



III. Outcomes:
Families have adequate economic resources to appropriately provide their children.

Indicators:

- Percent of families with children living in households at or below federal Family Income Guidelines.
- Percent of families with children living in households at 100%-200% of the federal Family Income Guidelines.
- Percent of parents who receive full payment of awarded child support.
- Percent of families paying more than 30% of their income for housing.
- Percent of population living in census tracts with poverty rates 1.5 times the state average.
- Percent of parents employed who have advanced training beyond high school.
- Percent of families who feels they are able to provide for the basic needs of their family.
- Percent of parents with functional life and literacy skills.



IV. Outcome:
Children and families are healthy and well nourished.

Indicators:

- Percent of children and families covered by health insurance.
- Percent of children who are immunized on appropriate schedule.
- Percent of children who receive regular child examinations and anticipatory guidance, diagnosis, maintenance, and treatment services.
- Percent of children who have healthy mouths.
- Percent of babies born at term and appropriate weight.
- Percent of children with vision and hearing problems at the time of entry into kindergarten.
- Percent of babies born with a birth weight of less than 3.3 pounds.
- Rate of infant mortality.
- Percent of infants and children born with two or more health and environmental risks.
- Percent of women who receive appropriate prenatal care and anticipatory guidance, diagnosis, and treatment services.
- Percent of children who achieve and maintain appropriate growth patterns.
- Percent of women who use illicit drugs and/or alcohol during pregnancy.
- Percent of children and families who have access to diets that meet daily nutritional requirements.
- Percent of women who receive appropriate prenatal core and anticipatory guidance, diagnosis, and treatment services.
- Percent of children exposed to tobacco in utero or through second hand smoke.
- Rate of child mortality.

V. Outcome:
Parent and child relationships are positive and nurturing.

Indicators:

- Percent of families with parenting knowledge and skills to anticipate and meet developmental needs of children.
- Percent of families who participate together in activities.
- Percent of parents who take positive action to support the expectations they have for their children's success.
- Percent of children who receive their primary care and education from adults who are committed and emotionally connected to them.
- Percent of children who live with and/or have frequent involvement with and receive emotional support from their fathers.

VI. Outcome:

All children and their families have access to quality early childhood care and education.

Indicators:

- Percent of children birth through whose families are seeking and participating in high quality early childhood care and education experiences.
- Percent of children ages three to five participating in high quality early childhood care and education.
- Percent of children participating in early childhood care and education who do not require special education services at kindergarten or the first grade.
- Percent of family members who attend or participate in school or community-based early care and education experiences in which their child is enrolled.
- Percent of early childhood care and education programs and services that include a parent education component.

VII. Outcome:

Children reach their individual developmental potential

Indicators:

- Percent of children showing individual developmentally appropriate progress in their physical/motor development.
- Percent of children showing individual developmentally appropriate progress in their cognitive development.
- Percent of children showing individual developmentally appropriate progress in their communication and language development.
- Percent of children showing individual developmentally appropriate progress in their social development.
- Percent of children showing individual developmentally appropriate progress in their emotional development.
- Percent of children showing individual developmentally appropriate progress related to moral development.
- Percent of children showing individual developmentally progress integrating all major areas of their development.
- Percent of children showing individual progress, in their approaches to learning (i.e., curiosity, persistence, attentiveness, reflection, interpretation, imagination, and invention).

OUTCOMES INDICATORS

Please contact us if you would like additional information.

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF
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